

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 15, 2017

SD employers experience military operations

By Lt. Col. Brendan Murphy – SDNG Service Member & Family Support

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. – About 25 employers from across the state experienced firsthand what it feels like to be a part of military operations at the South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's bosslift, June 10 and 15, during the Golden Coyote training exercise.

Nominated for the event by their employees, these employers experienced what Soldiers go through to use their skills while performing a variety of operations and training events. The exercise provides employers an opportunity to see their Soldiers training in such a large-scale and simulated deployed environment.

"When employers get to see and experience their service member's military training, they develop an appreciation for military service and are more likely to show support to their employee's military service," said Maj. Lona Christensen, program director, South Dakota ESGR. "Employers get to witness how military training includes leadership skills, responsibility and professional growth, which will translate into service member's employment."

"We love what we do and this annual training reestablishes what we teach and do as Soldiers," said 1st Sgt. Mike Dejong, 200th Engineer Company, SDNG. "We do what it takes to get the job done and it means a lot to us for our employers to be here to see what we do up close."

The training conducted highlights the vastly different lifestyles that Guard members lead when they leave the workplace for military duty. Golden Coyote offers civilian employers a more extensive list of training experiences, due to the large number of service members who attend every year.

Miles Mellor, president of Kilowatt Inc. in Sioux Falls, said seeing military training gave him a better understanding and appreciation of his employees' responsibilities on drill weekends and their two-week military commitments during the summer.

"I am excited to be here," said Mellor. "This firsthand experience makes me appreciate everything my employees go through serving in the National Guard."

Kathleen Schuh, a SD-ESGR volunteer and co-owner of Del Schuh's BH Pro Painting Inc., said the whole experience showed her these Soldiers must possess a vast knowledge base necessary to being proficient as a member of today's military.

"This was a great experience," said Schuh. "I love to volunteer and as an employer. I see the real value in bosslifts. It is very important for employers in our state to see what their service members do firsthand."

Several senior leaders from the SDNG attended in order to see the training and to visit with employers and ESGR volunteers.

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“It was great to see some of our employers take the time out of their busy schedules to come and see what their employees do while serving as Soldiers with the South Dakota National Guard,” said Brig. Gen. Kevin Giese, assistant adjutant general-Army. “Without their continued support, we cannot do our job without our employers allowing their employees to come do their job with us while in uniform.”

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High-resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



170610-Z-BM222-0001: U.S. Army Soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard and civilians with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve cross the Missouri River as a part of the Golden Coyote training exercise, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. The bosslift was held during the 33rd annual Golden Coyote training exercise, one of the premier venues for National Guard, Reserve and active duty military, providing relevant training opportunities for combat support and combat service support units in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Brendan Murphy)



170610-Z-BM222-0003: South Dakota employers watch members of the 200th Engineer Company load two vehicles and personnel onto one of the rafts used to transport both vehicles and personnel across one side of the Missouri River to the other as a part of Golden Coyote training exercise, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Brendan Murphy)



170610-Z-BM222-0004: U.S. Army Soldiers and senior leaders of the South Dakota Army National Guard (SDARNG) and civilians with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) cross the Missouri River as a part of Golden Coyote training exercise, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Brendan Murphy)



170615-A-UC938-0025: A local employer engages enemies in the Virtual Combat Convoy training simulator during a bosslift in Rapid City, S.D. June 15, 2017. The bosslift is designed to show civilian employers what their soldiers do during annual training and drill. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Mitchell Murphy)



170615-A-UC938-0021: Local employers have Meals Ready to Eat, or MRE, to get a taste of what their Soldiers would have in the field during a bosslift in Rapid City, S.D. June 15, 2017. The bosslift is designed to show civilian employers what their soldiers do during annual training and drill. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Mitchell Murphy)



170615-A-UC938-0020: Local employers board a HH-60M Black Hawk for a ride around the local area during a bosslift in Rapid City, S.D., June 15, 2017. The bosslift is designed to show civilian employers what their Soldiers do during annual training and drill. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Mitchell Murphy)

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at (605) 737-6721 or e-mail ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil